

## HEROES IN HUMBLE LIFE

## THE RED FLAG MAN

By

CLIVE PHILLIPS WOLLEY,

(Author of "The Chameleon Stone," Etc.)

When you take a ticket for Vancouver, B. C., across the Canadian Pacific railway, you receive a folder which expatiates on the marvelous scenery of the line, and the grandeur of the Rockies through which that line passes, but no mention is made in it of the red flag man, or of what they mean to the passengers of the C. P. railway.

From your Pullman window you see a panorama of beauty, stern and wild, and free, gliding by you as you lie dreaming in your lower berth; you see, if your mind has eyes, the first chapter in the history of a great nation, but you don't see the red flag man.

They are like the coal from which the power is obtained which propels your locomotive, humble, unobtrusive, but necessary.

Growler was a red flag man. His real name was Grosvenor, and he had, as a boy, dreamed of the "service" and a Victoria Cross. After a career of failure at school, caused principally by his inability to understand that figures had anything to do with fighting, he had awakened to find himself in the service of the C. P. railway, the discontented welder of a red flag, a private in the ranks of a great industry, known to his comrades as Growler, because he could see no glory in the dull duty by which he had to earn his bread.

For the year that he had served the great trains had gone safely; they had gone safely for ten years before his advent on the line; there seemed no reason why they should not always go safely, and therefore the monotony of his job had made Growler slack.

What chance was there, he argued, of anyone distinguishing himself at such a rotten game? At first Growler had seen some dignity in his service. A thousand lives lay in his hands. But that had all passed. Fly daily use his work had become merely a monotonous "grind," so many miles out and back, so many times a day and night, in any weather, for small pay, unnoticed and unknown.

His beat lay east and west of him as he sat, a long level run in the latter part of the foothills.

There were no giant peaks to stir the imagination, no impending snowslides to suggest great danger.

It was just a piece of rolling cattle country in the spring, through which a broad and turbid river wound in curious loops.

At the moment anyone but Growler would have noticed the ominous roar of that river.

He had heard it incessantly for so long, that its noise had become part of his normal environment, like the vast spaces, the smell of the sage bush, and the gloriously tinted velvet of those rolling uplands.

All he saw was "old Bill's line," and the long parallel lines of the company he served.

For an hour he sat in front of his cabin immovable as the boulder he sat upon, while his mind went back to the rectory in which he was born, and to a little case of medals which lay on the drawing-room table of that west country home.

The Grosvenors who had won those things had their chances, why should he never have his?

Then a hawk lit upon a rock two hundred yards away, and taking his Winchester, Growler lay down, and resting his cheek lovingly against its stock, sighted at the bird.

There was a long pause, while the man held his breath, and then the bird fell a broken handful of bones and feathers.

"I don't know that figures would have improved my shooting," muttered the man, and then as the sun was beginning to set, he bolted his billy and ate his solitary meal.

About midnight it would be his duty to ride his machine along the line to see that all was clear for the westbound train. He ought to have secured some sleep during the day, but he had had a bad day of it, thinking too much of what might have been, and was therefore, when the moon rose coldly over the polished bars of steel, a bit jittery.

Besides his lame leg had been troubling him. The river's voice, which he rarely noticed, had become audible to him, and familiar bluffs took on strange and threatening shapes.

He looked at his watch. In another hour the westbound express would be along, bearing with it a load of careless sleepers, lucky devils who had their chances he thought. He mounted his machine and went east.

At the first culvert he dismounted. It was all right still, but he had had no notion that the snows were going so fast. It was running bank high, and the way of it was like the way of a tide rip.

When he reached the trestle bridge, he found that the lights had not fooled him. There must have been a cloudburst of some kind up stream. Snow, however rapidly melting, could not have so swollen the river since morning, but ever as the river ran, she raged uselessly against the stout piers which supported the company's bridge.

Growler covered his twelve miles without finding more than an occasional stone upon the track, and then he sat down again upon his boulder, to wait until the smoke plumed monster with its line of brilliant eyes, should flash by and be gone.

As usual his thoughts reverted to the might-have-been. He saw himself a leader of men, as others of his name had been, and he ground his heel into the little red flag at his feet which was his badge of servitude.

All he asked of fate was some big thing to do, some enemy worth fighting. Why should he be shut out of the arena of men, picketed for life between a river and a railway line?

And as he thought the old bitter thoughts, the river like a vast and tawny dragon loomed white crests in the pale half light, and raved on beneath him stronger than any army of man's making. Surely that was big enough; an enemy sufficient for any man's pride.

Even Growler listened to it now. The threat in its voice was unmistakable, and yet he missed the message of it. The loop of the river round which Growler's beat ran was horseshoe shaped, but through this horseshoe was twelve miles round its outer curve, the heels of it were so close together that the flagman's cabin, and the trestle bridge standing on either heel of the shoe, were barely half a mile apart.

In the gray moonlight Grosvenor could see no details of the trestle, but he could see, though dimly, the bulk of it against the sky.

Just half an hour before the scheduled time at which the westbound express should cross the trestle, a large buttress of gravel and rock, which had stood for centuries knee deep in the river's brim, went out with a roar, and was mixed in a moment with the heavy flood.

Things were growing serious, or might soon become so, and Growler's spirits rose, and his brain became active.

From habit he looked toward the trestle, not because any fool flood like that could matter to the great bridge, but just from habit.

And yet what nonsense was this? Light was no worse than it had been, the moment he could see no trees, but dim bulk which had always on the far side, where the trains crossed from north to south of the river had gone.

The red flag man covered his eyes and

watched when he uncovered them, they told him the same impossible story.

There was only trestle, he saw, at the moment he was face to face with the great thing he had waited for. As the river had swept out the gravel buttress so it had swept out man's bridge, and there was no longer any way over for the express.

Way over? No, but there was a way in! Roaring along at her night speed in the flat, with hundreds inside of her, sleeping securely in the knowledge that underneath she was safe, the express would be heading into that hideous flood.

The enemy was through the lines. He, Grosvenor, the sentry, had been sleeping at his post, and the giant roaring below was laughing at "another surprise of the British forces."

No! By heaven, no! That should not be! He tore his machine from its place and swung it onto the track, but before he had mounted his brain had told him that that scheme would not do. He was cut off by the river. Even if he could ride the twelve miles in twenty-five minutes, which was impossible, he would, at the end of his ride, be on the wrong side of the river.

There was where he wanted to be, there, only a mile from where he stood, and there was no way except across that swirling flood which crushed earth's buttresses and made matchwood of man's bridges.

It was stronger than an army; how could one man struggle against it? Ah! but his thought braced him. He had asked, day and night, for years, for some deed to do; he had boasted to himself that he would have charged an army to win the V. C.

Here was the deed; where was the man? To attempt it meant certain death. These are the deeds for which England sometimes pays with glory. Yes, but even to a red flag, life is dear. Even to a hero, some voice seemed to reply, "glory is not cheap." It never is cheap except when it is that of another man, read of in the press.

But the right blood was in Growler, so that as the voices answered each other in his brain, his game leg had taken him down to the river's bank, and his clothes were dropping off him onto the boulders over which the spate lapped and hissed.

For one long minute he stood shivering on the brink of the impossible which had to be done, and then he heard the banshee cry of the coming train. She was still two stations away.

"It was my sentry go," he muttered.

## Cuban Diarrhoea.

U. S. soldiers who served in Cuba during the Spanish war know what this disease is, and that ordinary remedies have little more effect than so much water. Cuban diarrhoea is almost as severe and dangerous as a mild attack of cholera. There is one remedy, however, that can always be depended upon, as will be seen by the following certificate from Mrs. Minnie Jacobs of Houston, Texas: "I hereby certify that Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy cured my husband of a severe attack of Cuban diarrhoea, which he brought home from Cuba. We had several doctors, but they did him no good. One bottle of this remedy cured him, as our neighbors will testify. I thank God for so valuable a medicine." For sale by all leading druggists.

The Best

IS WHAT YOU WANT, especially when buying groceries.

We are the people that can furnish them to you at the right price.

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"Good Things to Eat"

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For Toilet and Bath

Delicate enough for the softest skin, and yet efficacious in removing any stain. Keeps the skin in perfect condition. In the bath gives all the desirable after-effects of Turkish bath. It should be on every wash-stand.

ALL GROCERS AND DRUGGISTS.

MAN MEDICINE

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Young Manhood Back Again

Are you going to keep on the way you are—weak—powerless—hopeless—and unable? Or shall the great MAN MEDICINE give you once more the gusto of joyful satisfaction, the pulse and throb of physical pleasure, the keen sense of MAN SENSATION, the luxury of life, the snap and snap of BODY POWER and COMFORT—FREE?

MAN MEDICINE does that. It makes man mighty in man strength and man force. It restores the ability of youth—cures nervous debility and man weakness. You feel again the glow and gleam of lively living.

A proof test of MAN MEDICINE is yours to prove and try without a dollar or a cent to pay. We send it FREE—plain wrapper—sealed prepaid—delivered.

It will do what you want it to do. MAN MEDICINE does what Man Medicine SHOULD do. It makes men REAL MEN—man-like—man-powerful—refreshes the well-springs of body sources and keeps them full.

Your name alone—and where to send the Man Medicine—that is all you have to do or SEND or ASK. We send it free to every discouraged one of the man sex.

INTERSTATE REMEDY COMPANY  
271 Luck Building, Detroit, Mich.

and the next moment a roar of devilish laughter came up from the river's bed, for the strongest of the forces of nature had a human heart to play with and conquer.

Yes, but it was island bred, that heart, and the God, whom islanders forget too often, loves the men who fight against long odds, so that, though the red dragon took it and chewed it in his jaws, and spat it out again in a spume of white water, though he rolled it over and over in his bed like a wretched log, that living boltsam missed the other wreckage of which the river was full, by a hair's breadth, and near mid-stream was still making a stroke or two towards its goal, whenever it came to the surface.

Growler had expected to die at the first plunge, good swimmer though he was, so that his first few strokes were made almost under protest as being too ridiculous against such a current.

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His "rotten leg," as he called it, was more useful in the water than on land, and though the great surges tossed him at one moment, and buried him the next, they gave him breathing spells in which to edge a foot or two nearer the shore, until at last an inswelling rush sent him blundering amongst submerged boulders, upon which, but for luck, he would have been ground to pieces.

Instead, he was left, caught like other drift, behind one of them, and lay there, like enough to drown now in two feet of water, though he had come safe through the flood. He was utterly spent, and something had struck him besides the boulder, so that his whole body seemed dead on one side.

"Hit, I guess," he muttered, half consciously, "that's when the good 'uns go on," and lifting his limp body out of the water, he crawled weakly up the bank. From the top of it he could see the line, and clinging with the tenacity of a bulldog to his last remnant of life and consciousness, he spent his strength in a tottering race towards the oncoming train.

She must have time. In spite of the air brakes, such a train going at such a pace could not be stopped in her own length. The broken bridge was behind him, the

river was crossed, and the moonlight still held.

So far it was well, but though he thought he was running he could not breathe, he knew that he could not keep his senses much longer even if he had them still, and there was a strange air humming in his head.

Ah, yes, those were the bagpipes, no doubt. They always play when men win the V. C., and that pain in his leg was another wound.

Luckily, at that moment, a sound he knew called him to himself. The metals between which he rang whispered to him, then a strong, live pulse drummed in them, and in the east a glow crept along them towards the runner which was neither the glow of moonlight nor of dawn.

Then Growler knew his duty and won his cross. He could make no legitimate signal. He had neither lamp nor flag. Naked he stood save for his shirt, and a figure standing waving that from the side of the track might be seen or might not.

In the middle of the track he must be seen, and in the middle of the track he stood, stark naked before God and man, four square to the death he realized, waving his red shirt for a warning to others,

The Best Hot Weather Medicine  
SALE TEN MILLION BOXES A YEAR  
**Cascarets**  
CANDY CATHARTIC  
10c, 25c, 50c. THEY WORK WHILE YOU SLEEP.  
PREVENT ALL SUMMER BOWEL TROUBLES.

and though the driver jammed on the brakes with a savage Western curse, which the recording angel mistook for a prayer, the brakes could only sigh over that which they were not strong enough to save.

When the King planned on Growler's

Victoria Cross, I wonder if he that the best soldiers don't but just find them in the count (The end.)

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# KEITH-O'BRIEN COMPANY

## Pre-Inventory Shoe Sale

The Biggest Shoe Event We Have Inaugurated This Year.

¶ The extraordinary growth of our shoe trade has amazed friends and the disinterested alike. ¶ Instead of it being merely a shoe department, the space occupied has assumed the proportions of an extensive store. ¶ No shoe store in the city carries a stock of women and children's shoes as large as ours. All of which means a tremendous stock. ¶ And now as inventory time has nearly arrived, the stock must be reduced. And the way to reduce a large stock, is to reduce it!—cut the prices!

### Women's Oxfords and Shoes.

All \$5.00 and \$6.00 ones --snappy styles and correct lasts - - - - -	<b>3.65</b>	Magnificent lines of women's oxfords in dark tan, black vici, white canvas --\$2.00 oxfords for - -	<b>1.45</b>
All \$3.50 and \$4.00 oxfords and shoes--latest shapes, high grade makes	<b>2.95</b>	Misses' and children's strap slippers in black or tan, regular \$1.50 and \$2.00	<b>95c</b>
All \$2.75 and \$3 shoes and oxfords--smart style, of splendid quality - - -	<b>2.35</b>	Misses' and children's slippers and oxfords--blacks, tans, cham-pagnes, in pretty button, lace and strap effects, \$1.75 to \$2.50	<b>1.45</b>

### Boys' Oxfords.

Sizes 10 to 2, \$1.95 Tans, patents, calfs and kids, values up to \$3.50. Sizes 2½ to 6, \$2.35  
Sale begins early Monday morning. Do not wait until afternoon to shop. Avoid the afternoon rush by shopping in the forenoon.

¶ The whole city marvels at the success of this store. The reason of that success is apparent to our friends. They know that our methods win trade. There is much in a customer getting her money's worth; obtaining bargains when bargains are expected; being able to return goods; having money refunded willingly believing absolutely in our advertised statements; finding out through comparison of goods and prices that merchandise is sold at this store at the lowest possible price consistent with good business. In other words, our policy is broad and generous--and we do things in a big, aggressive way. This house tells the people the simple truth and backs it up.

### Sample Line of Infants' Long and Short Dresses at Half of Regular Prices.

¶ It is not often a house is fortunate in buying a traveling man's line of samples. At half prices there should be big response.

¶ Included in the purchase are a number of children's French dresses, in sizes from 2 to 6 years. Only one of each kind.

\$1.00 for 50c.	\$3.00 for \$1.50.
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### Embroidery Laces.

Cotton galleon laces. In cream, ecru and white. Used for trimming lawn dresses. Worth up to 25 cents a yard.

The ladies will be interested in a large and beautiful stock of 25c cambric embroidery and insertion. Width 9 inches. Special

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